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under direct-hire authorities, based on severe shortage of candidates, the agency is required to report this change of events to OPM. OPM may also terminate an agency's authority when the agency has used an authority improperly.

(b) *Extension.* OPM may extend direct-hire authority if OPM determines, based on relevant, recent, and supportable data, that there is or will continue to be a severe shortage of candidates or a critical hiring need for particular positions as of the date the authority is due to expire. In their requests for extensions of direct-hire authorities, agencies must include an update of the supporting evidence that demonstrated the need for the original authority.

(c) *Reporting requirement.* On a periodic basis, OPM may request information from agencies regarding their use of these direct-hire authorities. The requested information may include numbers of positions, title, series, and grade of positions advertised under the direct-hire authority, the number of qualified applicants, the specific qualification criteria, and the number of applicants appointed under the authority.

(d) No new appointments may be made under the provisions of section 1413 of Public Law 108-136 after September 30, 2007; and

(e) Those departments and agencies, excluding the Department of Defense, that use the direct-hire authority provided in § 337.204(c) must submit to OPM a report on their implementation of section 1413 of Public Law 108-136 no later than December 31, 2006. The report must include:

(1) A description of how the agency's implementation satisfied each of the elements laid out in §§ 337.203 and 337.204(b)(1)–(8), as applicable;

(2) An assessment of the effectiveness of the authority in attracting employees with unusually high qualifications to the acquisition workforce; and

(3) Any recommendations on whether the authority should be extended.

[69 FR 33275, June 15, 2004, as amended at 70 FR 44847, Aug. 4, 2005]

5 CFR Ch. I (1–1–07 Edition)

Subpart C—Alternative Rating and Selection Procedures

SOURCE: 69 FR 33276, June 15, 2004, unless otherwise noted.

§ 337.301 Coverage and purpose.

This subpart implements the category rating and selection procedures at 5 U.S.C. 3319. This law authorizes agencies with delegated examining authority under 5 U.S.C. 1104(a)(2) to develop a category rating method as an alternative process to assess applicants for jobs filled through competitive examining.

§ 337.302 Definitions.

In this subpart:

(a) *Category rating* is synonymous with alternative rating as described at 5 U.S.C. 3319, and is a process of evaluating qualified eligibles by quality categories rather than by assigning individual numeric scores. The agency assesses candidates against job-related criteria and then places them into two or more pre-defined categories.

(b) *Quality categories* are groupings of individuals with similar levels of job-related competencies or similar levels of knowledge, skills, and abilities.

§ 337.303 Agency responsibilities.

To use a category rating procedure, agencies must:

(a) Establish a system for evaluating applicants that provides for two or more quality categories;

(b) Define each quality category through job analysis conducted in accordance with the “*Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures*” at 29 CFR part 1607 and part 300 of this chapter. Each category must have a clear definition that distinguishes it from other categories;

(c) Describe each quality category in the job announcement and apply the provisions of part 330, subparts B, F, and G of this chapter;

(d) Place applicants into categories based upon their job-related competencies or their knowledge, skills, and abilities; and

(e) Establish documentation and record keeping procedures for reconstruction purposes.